UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1997/106
23 December 1996

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-third session
Item 5 of the provisional agenda

QUESTION OF THE REALIZATION IN ALL COUNTRIES OF THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS CONTAINED IN THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND IN THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS, AND STUDY OF SPECIAL PROBLEMS WHICH THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FACE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE THESE HUMAN RIGHTS

Decisions adopted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at its fifteenth session

Note by the Secretary-General

1. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/4 and a decision taken by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at its fifteenth session, the Secretary-General has the honour to bring to the attention of the Commission on Human Rights relevant decisions adopted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at its fifteenth session, held from 18 November to 6 December 1996.

Programme of action for the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights takes note of the various formal and informal discussions that have been held in relation to the preparation of a programme of action for the Committee. It recognizes the importance of adopting a comprehensive programme to be forwarded to the High Commissioner for Human Rights and to be considered by all of the relevant bodies within the human rights domain. It authorizes its Chairperson to draw up such a programme of action, taking full account of its discussions at successive sessions and encompassing the full range of measures that would be necessary to ensure that adequate attention is given to the commitment to promote respect for the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and for the central role to be played in that regard by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. It decides that the programme of action should be completed immediately after its fifteenth session and included in its report to the Economic and Social Council.

Special rapporteur on economic, social and cultural rights

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommends that the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-third session should give consideration to the appointment of a special rapporteur on economic, social and cultural rights. The Committee notes that while there is a large number of thematic and related mechanisms dealing with different aspects of civil and political rights, there is none dealing solely with the economic, social and cultural rights recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, despite the recognized interdependence, indivisibility and interrelatedness of the two sets of rights.

Draft optional protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights devoted several meetings at its fifteenth session to consideration of a further report prepared at its request by Mr. Philip Alston on the proposed draft optional protocol to the Covenant. At its 55th meeting, it adopted its final report on this issue to be sent to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-third session.

Draft guidelines on structural adjustment

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights takes note of the report presented to it by three of its members - Mr. Ceausu, Mr. Grissa and Mr. Marchan Romero - in relation to the request to the Committee by the Commission on Human Rights to comment on the proposal to draft guidelines relating to structural adjustment. It requests its Chairperson to forward those views to the Commission on Human Rights.